

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES TINAWS

ENTRY TASKS

Here are two ways I've used to get students thinking before we read a new book. Email me and share your ideas!

A. Spend a few minutes talking about these prompts. ¹ Choose one or two of the questions from the prompt. If you've got a couple leaders, or kids who will get disruptive if they don't get the chance to speak, call on them and let them share their opinions first. Use their energy to wake everyone up! ² Then have elbow partners discuss the questions with each other for a few minutes. ³ Randomly select students to tell the class what their partner said. ⁴ After a few kids have answered, then go back and quiz the whole class, "Who can tell me what Donna said? Where's her favorite outdoor place?" Praise kids who have listened to each other's responses—sometimes this is the quietest kid in the room, sometimes (and it will shock you!) it's the kid who never seems to stop talking! Either way it's wonderful to see them learning to listen and becoming a community. (Quick tip : Remember, when you praise one kid, make sure the others understand that you are not subtly putting them all down! If you use praise as a punishment you will make it difficult to use it as an effective tool.) ⁵ Now have them answer the questions in writing, focusing on whatever skill you are working on at the time.

B. If you have a room full of kids with internet access, then use socrative.com to set up a poll. Then you can graph the results on the white board (be sure to give that marker to one of your wild ones!)

ENTRY TASK WRITING/DISCUSSION PROMPTS

A. Descriptive Paragraph. Where is your favorite outdoor place? Your backyard? A park you visit often or maybe one you visited on a trip? The beach? Write a paragraph about this place. Use the first person. Try to explain why you like it so much by using your five senses. What smells do you like or dislike? What kinds of things do you touch when you're there—how do those things feel? Describe the colors and shapes you see. Have you ever 'accidentally' tasted something there? What was that like? What sounds do you hear? How do the sounds make you feel?

B. Personal Dilemma. What do you think about secrets? Is it good to keep a secret? Have you ever kept one? Why? Was it your secret or someone else's? Were you glad you kept the secret? If you didn't keep the secret, why not? Who did you tell? Whether you kept the secret or not, what were the consequences? In other words, what happened because you told or didn't tell? Did it help or hurt someone? Imagine a situation where it would be good to keep a secret. Imagine one where it would be a bad idea.

C. Haiku. How many nouns can you find on the book jacket? Make a list with your elbow partner. Now that you have listed all the nouns you and your classmates know, use an adjective to describe each noun and then give a verb to show what you think the noun is doing or what it might do or should do. Here's an example : a lonely lighthouse flashes. Lonely is the adjective, Lighthouse is the noun, and flashes is the verb. An added bonus with this example is the repetition of the sound 'l' in each word.

Using those nouns, adjectives, and verbs, write a haiku. (I would love to see these!)